

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-8, and 10-17 are pending. Claim 1 is amended. Claims 2 and 9 are cancelled. Claim 1 now includes the subject matter of original claim 2. Claim 8 now includes the subject matter of original claim 9. No new matter is presented. Claim 5 was canceled previously.

The specification has been amended to correct usage errors.

The drawings were objected to because every feature of the invention specified in the claims was not shown. The Examiner is objecting because the Examiner assumes that the data terminal 1 is the claimed first transmitter. This is not proper. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's objection under 37 CFR 1.83(a). Elements such as transmitters are devices well known in the art and thus do not need to be specifically illustrated in the drawings because one of ordinary skill in the art would readily know how to make and use the invention without such illustrations. Accordingly, applicant requests that this objection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as indefinite. The Examiner equates the modem of a network to the transmitter of the claimed invention. (See Office Action, page 4.) Further, the Examiner asserts that a dictionary definition of a modem is the same as the claimed transmitter. (See Office Action, page 6, lines 6-11.) Neither of the assertions is proper.

First, a modem is a public telephone switch network device that converts a signal when a computer wishes to send or receive digital data over an analog dial-up telephone line. The conversion process transforms data to or from analog form for transmission over the local loop of a telephone system. The mode is involved with converting data from one type to another in public switched telephone networks (PSTNs). Telephone electronics networks have nothing to do with the transmitter of the parts-management system as recited in claim 1.

Second, the modem of the dictionary definition asserted by the Examiner in the Office Action is not the same as or obviously similar to a transmitter for transmitting data in a telephone system. Nor would a person of ordinary skill in the art have had any reason to reasonably interpret

the claimed transmitters in the manner the Examiner asserts. A person of ordinary skill in the art would have understood that the transmitter recited in claim 1 transmits data through a transmission for a smart card, or integrated circuit card. The claimed transmitter involves transmissions between one of the claimed transmitters regarding the remaining life of a multi-function peripheral component, regardless of whether the component was installed in a single MFP or multiple MFPs. A person of ordinary skill in the art would have understood that the claim language refers to the claimed transmitters in connection with transmitting information about the claimed total life of the component, and not data transformation from either digital-to-analog or analog-to-digital as required by a public switched telephone network.

The claims stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) over Okigami, U.S. Patent No. 6,401,116, in view of Antziopoulos, U.S. Patent No. 5,847,814 and De Bonet, U.S. Patent No. 5,819,288.

The claimed invention calculates the remaining lifetime of the component, despite the component previously having been installed in another multi-function peripheral (MFP). Thus, claim 1 is amended to recite a parts-management system, in part, wherein, “said second memory stores a life value showing a total life of each part.” The parts-management system of claim 1, wherein a second memory stores a life value is not disclosed in any of Okigami, Antziopoulos, or De Bonet, or any combination thereof.

None of Okigami, Antziopoulos, or De Bonet, either alone or in any combination thereof, discloses or suggests all of the limitations as recited in claim 1. Okigami, for example, is merely directed to a remote trouble management system (See Okigami, col. 4, line 8.) In Okigami’s system, trouble information is relayed. The disclosed trouble information data includes messages, such as “no paper” or “no toner,” referring to the need to refill the photocopying paper in a photocopier or the toner in a toner drum necessary for page replication or printing. (See Okigami col. 4, lines 53-56.) Displaying trouble information, such as no paper or “no toner” is not the same as or obviously similar to the claimed configuration. Okigami discloses nothing to a person of

ordinary skill in the art concerning a second memory stores a life value showing a total life of each part as recited in claim 1.

Neither Okigami nor Antziopoulos would have been considered relevant by a person of ordinary skill in the art when the invention was made. Nor would the references, even if considered, have resulted in the claimed invention. For example, Antziopoulos merely discloses a magnetic card 50 used in a single document photocopier. In Antziopoulos, a user puts the magnetic card 50 into the disclosed photocopier and records how many photocopies the disclosed photocopier makes. Antziopoulos further discloses that the magnetic card 50 records the number of photocopies made using the photoconducting drum 12, a replaceable component of the photocopier. (See col. 3, lines 17-18). Antziopoulos further discloses that rollers 16, 18 are other replaceable components. The recording function of the magnetic card 50 is facilitated by individual level-of-use detectors that discretely count how many photocopies are made using each of the components 12, 16, 18. (See Antziopoulos, col. 3, lines 65-66.) At col. 5, lines 22-31 of Antziopoulos, status-data of the copier and the component are stored on the magnetic card 50. When returned to the manufacturer for recycling purposes, the manufacturer analyzes the magnetic card's 50 data, including the average life of the components 12, 16, 18. Thus, the manufacturer assesses the photocopier's reliability and makes improvements to design and reliability. (See Antziopoulos, col. 2, line 59. The magnetic card can only be used only once. (See Antziopoulos, col. 5, line 15-16.)

In the claimed invention, in contrast, a part is monitored continuously and independently from the multi-function peripheral in which the integrated circuit (IC) chip is installed. The claimed invention transmits information from the terminal apparatus to the management apparatus for purposes of identifying each replacement part and the part's total usage. The claimed total life requires tracking a component's use regardless of whether the component was installed in one MFP or several MFPs. As the specification explains, the claimed invention allows for a "continuous management of the part even if the part has been used in a plurality of apparatuses." (See specification, page 35, lines 7-10.) The parts management apparatus as recited in claim 1 uses this

information recorded in the claimed second memory to determine how long the identified part has been in operation. This is the claimed life value showing a total life of each part as recited in amended claim 1.

Antziopoulos discloses nothing about the claimed life value or the claimed total life of each part. Thus, the second memory, which is configured to store a life value showing a total life of each part as recited in amended claim 1, is not the same as or obviously similar to Antziopoulos.

Antziopoulos fails to disclose or suggest removing a component from a photocopier and reinstalling said component into another apparatus and tracking the component usage in both apparatuses.

Thus, Antziopoulos fails to disclose or suggest anything concerning the claimed configuration.

Finally, De Bonet is asserted by the Examiner in the Office Action to complete the rejection under 35 USC 103(a). However, De Bonet fails to resolve any of the deficiencies found in either of Okigami or Antziopolous. De Bonet is simply directed to an image retrieval system. (See col. 21, line 67.) De Bonet discloses query by example. (See col. 8, lines 53-56.) At Fig. 2, images are retrieved from any of the sources disclosed in De Bonet, such as the Internet, a scanner, digital camera, or external databases. The image classification and retrieval system cited by the Examiner in the Office Action supposedly improves upon search results, tailoring them as more query images are entered for search. (See De Bonet, col. 15, lines 19-38.) De Bonet's image retrieval and classification has nothing to do with the claimed invention. De Bonet fails to disclose or suggest anything that would have been considered, in combination with either Okigami or Antziopolous, by a person of ordinary skill in the art that would have resulted in that person having made the claimed invention.

Since no person of ordinary skill in the art would have made the claimed invention using Okigami, Antziopolous or De Bonet, either alone or in any combination thereof, claim 1 is not obvious. Thus, the rejection under 35 USC 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Accordingly, claim 1 is allowable. The claims depending from claim 1 are allowable at least due to their respective dependencies.

Independent claim 8 recites a method that contains substantially similar subject matter as allowable claim 1. Thus, claim 8 is allowable. Accordingly, claims 10-13 are allowable at least due to their dependencies from independent claim 8.

Claim 15 recites a parts-management apparatus, in part, wherein “the actual usage of each part over its life, including the actual usage of each part that has been used in a plurality of apparatus.” None of Okigami, Antziopolous or De Bonet, either alone or in any combination thereof, discloses or suggests tracking the claimed “actual usage” of a component that “has been used in a plurality of apparatus” as recited in claim 15. Therefore, claim 15 is not obvious. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn, and claim 15 is allowable.

Claims 16-17 are allowable at least due to their dependencies from claim 15.

Early action soliciting allowance of the claims pending is respectfully requested.

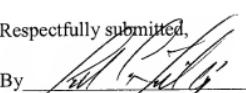
In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no.

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